

that Avar should be interpreted in accordance with the unambiguous teaching of the specification, which states the band has the structure of an o-ring.

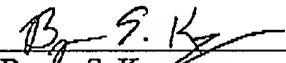
Based upon the above discussion, Avar does not teach a structure that facilitates movable positioning of a band. Furthermore, Avar merely discloses a band having the configuration of an o-ring and does not disclose, therefore, a flange attached to the band that facilitates movable positioning of the band. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1 and 17 are allowable over Avar, and that claims 2-5, 11-14, and 18-19 are allowable for at least the same reasons.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, the Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are in a condition for allowance. The Applicants respectfully request, therefore, that the rejections be withdrawn and that this application now be allowed.

This Amendment is being timely filed by facsimile transmission on July 8, 2003. Should additional fees or an extension of time be deemed necessary for consideration of this Amendment, such fees or extension are hereby requested and the Commissioner is authorized to charge deposit account number 19-0733 for the payment of the requisite fee. If anything further is desirable to place the application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned representative at (503) 425-6800.

Respectfully submitted,

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